



BUREAU OF POPULATION, REFUGEES, AND MIGRATION



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REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM FOR EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

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Background

Since 1975, the U.S. has resettled over 900,000 refugees from Europe and Central Asia. Approximately two-thirds of this number has come from the countries of the former Soviet Union, and the balance from other parts of Europe. Since 1989, the U.S. has admitted more than 440,000 refugees. The majority of these cases are adjudicated under the interview standard established by the Lautenberg Amendment, which applies to members of specified religious minorities (Jews, Evangelicals, and certain members of the Ukrainian Catholic or Ukrainian Orthodox Churches) from the countries of the former Soviet Union. In FY 2010, the U.S. admitted 1,526 refugees from 12 countries in Europe and Central Asia, including those under the Lautenberg Amendment in-country program. The Lautenberg Amendment was enacted on November 21, 1989 as Sec. 599D of the FY 1990 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act (P.L. 101-167) and will expire on May 31, 2011.

A Regional Refugee Coordinator posted to the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, Austria oversees refugee admissions from the region for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). PRM has established a Resettlement Support Center (RSC) based in Moscow to coordinate refugee case preparation, post-adjudication processing, and cultural orientation in Europe. Officers of the Department of Homeland Security/ U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS/USCIS), also based in Moscow, travel to conduct refugee adjudication interviews throughout the region. Transportation to the United States is arranged by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

An RSC in Vienna, Austria conducts processing for Iranian religious minorities (see Fact Sheet for Near East/South Asia for more details).



FY 2011 Admissions Program

The FY 2011 ceiling for Europe is 2,000. In addition to continued processing of Lautenberg Amendment cases (primarily in Russia and Ukraine), we will continue to accept referrals from NGOs and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) throughout the region.